

## **CAPSULE SUMMARY**

**BA-1016**

**404 Fairmount Avenue**

**East Towson, Baltimore County**

**1900-1915**

**Private**

The single family dwelling at 404 Fairmount Avenue was constructed between 1900 and 1915 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

This dwelling standing on a random rubble stone foundation this wood frame building has a front-gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles. It is two-and-a-half-stories high covered with aluminum siding. There are two center interior brick chimneys one featuring a corbeled cap. The first and second stories are two bays wide. The entrance has a single-leaf replacement aluminum glass and panel door. Across the façade is a full-width shed-roof porch supported with turned wood posts with a continuous balustrade covered with aluminum siding. The first and second story windows are 2/2 double-hung wood sash covered with aluminum storm windows. A 6/6 double hung wood sash is located in the front gable. Extending off the porch is an aluminum awning similar to the awnings covering each of the windows on the façade. A non-historic two-story shed-roof addition located on the side elevation flush with the façade was constructed in several periods. There is an entrance on the façade of this section, and a portion of the second story has been enclosed with glass and aluminum siding.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA- 1016

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other

### 2. Location

street and number 404 Fairmount Avenue not for publication

city, town Baltimore vicinity

county Baltimore County

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Charles H. Richardson, Dorothy Riley, et all

street and number 404 Fairmount Avenue telephone Not Available

city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21286-5420

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse liber 12839 folio 740

city, town Towson tax map 70A tax parcel 135 tax ID number 918350430

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Current Function                             | Resource Count   |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture         | Contributing   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape           | Noncontributing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade      | 1  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |   | <input type="checkbox"/> defense             |  |
|   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> education           |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary            |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> government          | 1  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> health care         |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> industry            |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> religion            |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> social              |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress    |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> unknown             |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use   |  |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other:              |  |
|   |   |  | Total  |
|   |   |  | Number of Contributing Resources<br>previously listed in the Inventory |
|   |   |  | 1  |

## 7. Description

Inventory No. BA- 1016

### Condition

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> altered      |

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This single-family dwelling located at 404 Fairmount Avenue was constructed between 1900 and 1915 in East Towson. Standing on a random rubble stone foundation this wood frame building has a front-gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles. It is two-and-a-half-stories high covered with aluminum siding. There are two center interior brick chimneys one featuring a corbeled cap. The first and second stories are two bays wide. The entrance has a single-leaf replacement aluminum glass and panel door. Across the façade is a full-width shed-roof porch supported with turned wood posts with a continuous balustrade covered with aluminum siding. The first and second story windows are 2/2 double-hung wood sash covered with aluminum storm windows. A 6/6 double hung wood sash is located in the front gable. Extending off the porch is an aluminum awning similar to the awnings covering each of the windows on the façade. A non-historic two-story shed-roof addition located on the side elevation flush with the façade was constructed in several periods. There is an entrance on the façade of this section, and a portion of the second story has been enclosed with glass and aluminum siding. A chain link fence lines the front and sides of the property.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. BA- 1016

| Period  | Areas of Significance                            | Check and justify below                               |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> economics                    | <input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine        | <input type="checkbox"/> performing arts     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology              | <input type="checkbox"/> education                    | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering                  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/<br>recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000-                | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage              | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/<br>settlement   | <input type="checkbox"/> literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> social history      |  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning      |   | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime history       | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation            |   | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> other:              |  |

**Specific dates** 1900 ca.-present

**Architect/Builder** Unknown

**Construction dates** 1900-1915

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The house at 404 Fairmount Avenue was constructed between 1900 and 1915 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. East Towson is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, specifically the pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA- 1016

- Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland.* Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.  
Baltimore County Historic Inventory.  
Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County.* Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.  
*Map of Baltimore County.* Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.  
Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men.* Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.  
Sidney, J. C. *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys.* Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

## 10. Geographical Data

|                               |                 |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Acreage of surveyed property  | <u>.17 Acre</u> |                                   |
| Acreage of historical setting | <u>Unknown</u>  |                                   |
| Quadrangle name               | <u>Towson</u>   | Quadrangle scale: <u>1:24,000</u> |

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The dwelling is located at 404 Lennox Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been associated with Tax Map 70, Parcel 135 since its construction between 1900 and 1915.

## 11. Form Prepared by

|                 |   |           |                  |
|-----------------|---|-----------|------------------|
| name/title      | K. Baynard, R. Weidlich, J. Bunting, Architectural Historians |           |                  |
| organization    | EHT Traceries, Incorporated                                   | date      | November 5, 2001 |
| street & number | 1121 5th Street NW  | telephone | 202.393.1199     |
| city or town    | Washington  | state     | DC               |

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



# East Towson: Planimetric Data



Prepared by:  
Baltimore County Office of Planning  
401 Bosley Avenue  
Towson, Maryland 21204  
June, 2001



Scale

1 inch = 200 feet

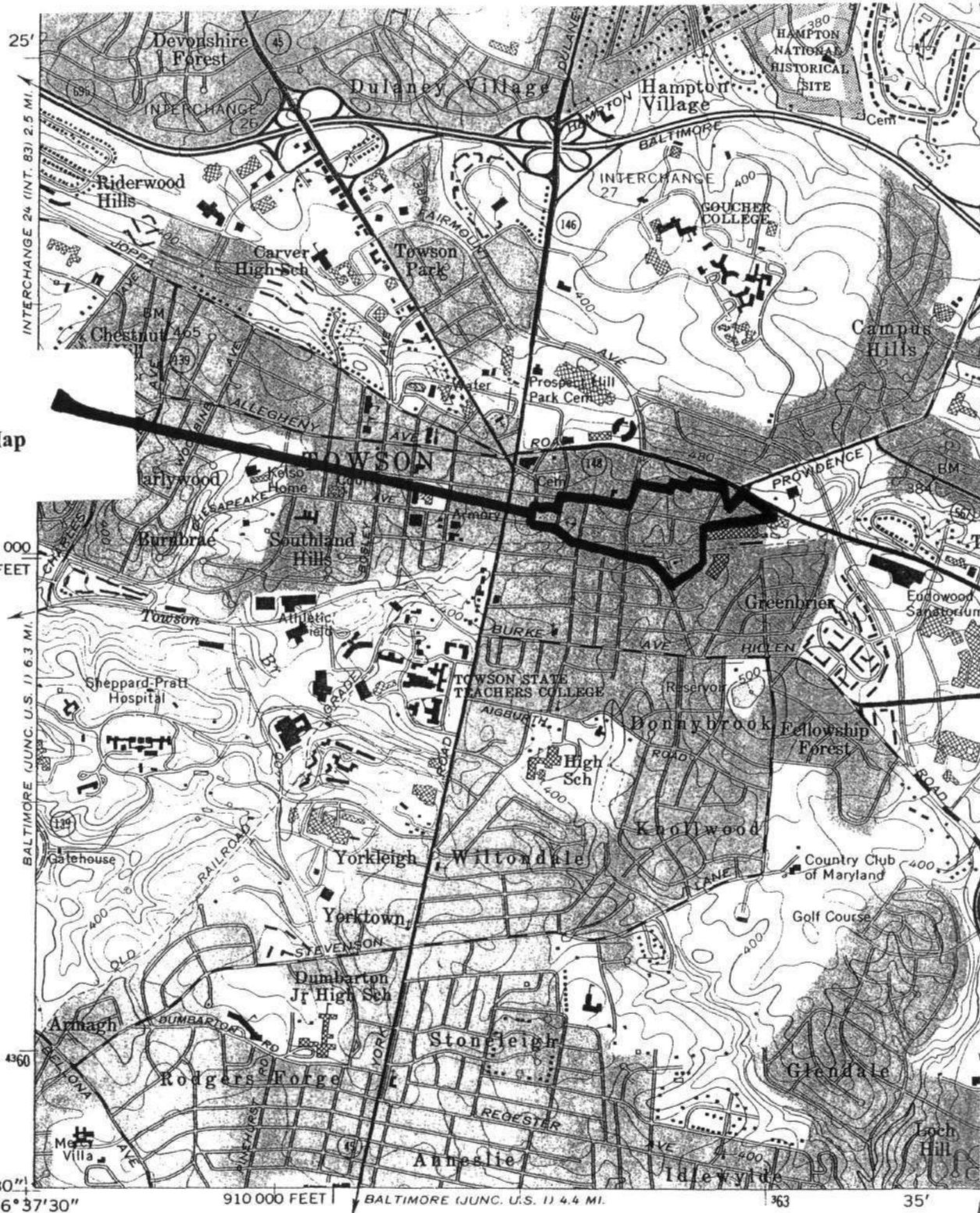
1:2400

100 0 100 200 Feet

Legend

- Paved Roads
- Unpaved Roads
- Paved Parking / Driveways
- Study Area Boundary
- Hydrographic Features
- Buildings
- Vegetation

Data Sources:  
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)  
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)  
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)  
Coordinate System:  
Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum  
Elevations in Feet: NAVD83 Vertical Datum  
Date of Data Capture: March 1996  
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'



BA-1016  
East Towson  
Towson, Maryland  
Towson USGS Quad Map  
Baltimore County

(BALTIMORE WEST)  
5662 SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland  
Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

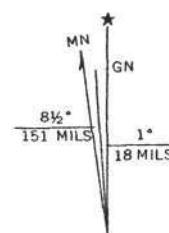
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944  
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system  
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only  
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from  
aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information not  
field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET





BA- 1016

HOUSE, 404 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

MD-SHPD

SOUTHWEST CORNER, VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST

1 of 2

TRACERIES, 10/2001



BA-1016

HOUSE, 404 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

MD-SHPD

NORTHWEST CORNER, VIEW LOOKING SOUTHEAST

2 of 2

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Richardson House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

404 Fairmount Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

VICINITY OF

Second

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore County**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☐ BUILDING(S)  
☒ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE  
☐ COMMERCIAL  
☐ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☐ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mollie RichardsonTelephone #: 823-4053

STREET &amp; NUMBER

404 Fairmount Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

VICINITY OF

Maryland 2104

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Courts Bldg.

Liber #: 507  
Folio #: 313

STREET &amp; NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**BA-1016 - 404 Fairmount

c. 1905 - 1915

Of frame construction and two-story height, this house is three rooms deep by two bays wide. A two-story addition covers the north side, and a one-story porch shades the street facade.

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**

☒ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

☐ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

**404 Fairmount**

The first section of this house has a side-hall single parlor plan followed by two other rooms, one behind the other, to the east. The gable end of the house faces west, the street side. Two stove flues, one in the east and one in the west wall of the central room, heat the house.

On the gable facade, a transomed door to the north leads to the stair hall, while a 2/2 window to the south lights the parlor. Two 2/2 windows light the second floor, and a 6/6 window appears in the attic. The exterior architraves are an unusual combination of cyma recta and cavetto.

A shed-roofed porch supported by turned posts runs along the facade. A two-story modern addition covers the north side. A one-story addition stands to the southeast. The main house, covered in grey asphalt imitating cutstone, has louvered shutters. The squat newel post is followed by turned balusters. The interior architraves intersect in circled corner blocks.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY



**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

BA-1016

| PERIOD                               | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |   |   |  |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499   | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599   | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699   | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799   | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899   | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-       | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |  |
|                                      |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |  |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house was built by a William Lewis around the turn of the century, with land conveyed to him by The Towson Real Estate Co. (Nov. 30, 1904). William Lewis, a free Black, was listed among the voter registration of the Ninth District in 1870. William Lewis owned the property until he sold his property to Charles Richardson, husband of Mollie Richardson (March 17, 1919). The Richardson family has resided at this location since that time.

Land Records of Baltimore County Liber Folio  
507:313

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marcus Pollock; M. Stinson, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save East Towson

STREET &amp; NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Avenue

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

DATE

6/30/77

TELEPHONE

823-8870

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438



BA-1016  
Richardson House  
404 Fairmount Ave.  
Towson, Md.  
west

Merry Stinson  
1977 |